March/April 1985

Lasca Leaves

Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

1984 BENEFACTORS HONORED AT CAF HOLIDAY RECEPTION

GEORGINA (Mrs. Preston) Hotchkis was the special guest at a holiday reception Dec. 14 honoring the 1984 Benefactors of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. After enjoying champagne and hors d'oeuvres in the festively decorated Peacock Pavilion, the Benefactors were guided on a special tour of the interior of the Queen Anne Cottage.

Mrs. Hotchkis' presence added even more significance to the centennial celebration for the Cottage because she and Susanna (Mrs. Richard) Dakin were responsible for turning the derelict building into a historical landmark more than 30 years ago.

The party, given by the Executive and Membership committees of the California Arboretum Foundation, commemorated another year of achievement for the Benefactors. Their project for 1985 is construction of the decking and pergola around the soon-to-be-completed koi pond in Meadowbrook.

Members of this altruistic group include: Mr. and Mrs. Guilford Babcock, the Forest Lawn Foundation, Mrs. Vivian Ragsdale, Robert Paradise, Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Stafford, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh MacNeil, Mrs. Don Freeberg, Mr. and Mrs. H. Randall Stoke, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pankow, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Frank, Dr. Bonnie Templeton, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Weiss, Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Wall, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Slavik, Mrs. Thomas Lowry and Donald Slavik.

Georgina (Mrs. Preston) Hotchkis, left, celebrates the centennial of the Queen Anne Cottage with Director Francis Ching and Mrs. Ching during a Benefactors Reception Dec. 14.

Queen Anne Cottage Centennial

About 120 volunteers took time out from their busy Christmas schedules to run the open house celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Queen Anne Cottage Dec. 15 and 16. This year the biennial event was extended to include an art show in Ayres Hall of Environmental Education, an exhibit of hand-made tools in the Coach Barn and tours of the Santa Anita Depot.

During the preview Friday evening, about 500 Foundation members and their guests browsed among the paintings and sipped hot spiced wine at the art show as they waited for their turn to tour the Cottage. Many also used the time to shop for the succulent wreaths grown by Mrs. Eleanore Wigley's committee and handmade Christmas ornaments made by the Las Voluntarias crafts ladies.

Virginia (Mrs. C. A.) Stein and Patricia (Mrs. Kenneth) Kneale organized the art show that featured Arboretum scenes by artists from local community colleges and art groups as well as members of Las Voluntarias.

The opportunity to tour the interior of the Queen Anne Cottage drew about 1,000 members of the public Saturday and Sunday despite cold winds and threatened rain. Sandy (Mrs. Don) Haven scheduled all the docents who led tours in the Cottage, and Peg (Mrs. Thomas) Dorr arranged for docents in the Depot. In the Coach Barn visitors had questions about the carpentry tools and "whatzits" gadgets Ernest Harley had restored, so Milt Murset made sure that informed volunteers were on hand during the open house.

Other volunteers under the direction of Dolors (Mrs. Glen) Ross spent a day making wreaths and garlands to decorate the Historical Section and half of another putting them in place.

Coordinating all the committees were general chairmen, Siby (Mrs. Perry) Minton and Arden (Mrs. John) Keevers.

The effort extended by all the volunteers was obviously appreciated by visitors, many of whom spent an entire day wandering through the different eras of California history represented on the Arboretum grounds.

Above: *Thelma (Mrs. Lawrence) Petz, left, and Mitzi (Mrs. Robert) Gilmartin finish decorating the tree in the bedroom of the Cottage.*

Dolors (Mrs. Glen) Ross adjusts the crest on one of the peacocks she created for the parlor mantel in the Queen Anne Cottage.

Below: *Fiesta Floats supplied the deer that greet Foundation members in Ayres Hall during a preview of the art show Friday evening.*

Ernest Harley, left, stands in the Coach Barn, ready to answer questions from visitors examining the century-old planes he restored.

After 100 years, both the Queen Anne Cottage and the costumes worn by Kelly, 4, and her mother, Janice (Mrs. Robert) Golden, still sparkle like new for the Holidays.

ARBORETUM SUPPLIES TREES FOR ARBOR DAY IN LA SCHOOLS

THE URBAN FOREST in Los Angeles County increased by another 800 trees when the California Arboretum Foundation donated Arbor Day trees to schools for planting on their campuses. Each year the Foundation names a "Tree of the Year" and distributes five-gallon specimens free to the schools as part of its program of urban beautification as well as a program in conservation and educational services to students. The tree chosen for 1985 was the crown-of-gold tree *(Cassia excelsa)*, a fast growing tree with brilliant yellow flower clusters that the Arboretum introduced into the Southern California landscape about 20 years ago.

On March 7, all participating schools use the tree as a focal point for ceremonies that mark Arbor Day in California. For the past 15 years the Foundation and the Oak Tree Foundation have provided funds for the program that helps make students in Los Angeles County aware of how vitally important the urban forest is to their wellbeing.

Although the Arbor Day tree program is very popular with students, it is only one of several educational activities the Foundation sponsors for young people. During the academic year, trained docents from Las Voluntarias lead groups of fourth, fifth and sixth grade students on field trips through the Arboretum grounds. Last year almost 10,000 students got a firsthand look at the dynamics of ecology, and the human side of California history during two-hour hikes with the hard-working volunteers.

The annual Environmental Education Fair is also sponsored by the Foundation. On a Saturday in March more than 50 organizations gather in the Ayres Hall of Environmental Education to show teachers, youth group leaders and parents new methods of teaching young people to appreciate the natural sciences. With money from the California personalized license plate fund and manpower from a variety of governmental agencies, schools and private organizations, the fair has expanded each of the six years since it began. In 1984 there were about 4,000 visitors to the exhibits and demonstrations.

The golden-yellow flowers of Cassia multijuga, *a tree just introduced by the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, make it a valuable addition to the Southern California landscape.*

ARBORETUM INTRODUCES NEW FLOWERING CASSIA

CASSIA *multijuga* A. Rich. *(Senna multijuga)* has been chosen for introduction in 1985 by the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. This cassia is a round-headed to somewhat spreading semi-evergreen tree which grows to 25-30 feet high. Its native range is South America, the island of Trinidad, and southern Mexico to which one of the three subspecies is confined.

The leaves which range from 3 - 12 inches in length are divided into 15 - 56 pairs of leaflets. Each leaflet, up to 2 inches long, is dark green above and paler below with an oblique base and a tiny point at the tip. In early autumn *Cassia multijuga* produces many heads of rich yellow flowers, each 1 - 2 inches across, at the ends of the branches. The flat reddish or brownish-purple seed pods that follow are up to 6 - 8 inches long and ½ - ¾ inch wide.

Cassia multijuga is fast-growing when very young and moderately fast its second year and beyond. It is hardy to at least 28 degrees and probably to 26 degrees. It has moderate water requirements; a thorough soaking every week to 10 days during the hottest weather would be adequate. Prune only to shape or to remove dead wood. Propagation is by means of seeds which require no special pretreatment.

Cassia multijuga is one of the most beautiful of the much-admired cassias, a flowering tree that should be a showy addition to Southern California. Specimen trees are growing in various areas of the Arboretum and have performed well for many years. Only the unavailability of viable seed has delayed introduction of this tree into the landscape until now.

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Plant Portraits

Colorful Maples of the Arboretum

By Edward Murray

LEAF COLOR is one of the chief glories of an autumn in Pennsylvania or Wisconsin where native maples, the red maple *(A. rubrum)* and the sugar maple *(A. saccharum)*, provide most of this color. In California two Asiatic maples, the Amur maple *(A. ginnala)* and the Japanese maple *(A. palmatum)*, also add bright reds and golden yellows to the autumn spectrum, although the colors may not be as reliable here as the sweet gum *(Liquidambar styraciflua)*. Several maple cultivars will be tested at the Arboretum to discover if they will consistently provide autumn color under California conditions. The following maples have been selected from among those that the Arboretum currently cultivates in Meadowbrook and the Asiatic-North American Section.

Bark characteristics in the maples are especially fine in the "snakebark" group including the unusual Oriental maples such as *A. capillipes, A. laxiflorum, A. rubescens* and *A. sikkimense* subspecies *davidii*. The leaves are a handsome green, often with red petioles, and the green bark with vertical slits resembles a large, green snake. Try some on a cool, north-facing slope or on the north side of a building because they prefer a cool, moist, shady place to avoid sunburned foliage. An

The glossy green in the leaves of this young David's maple (Acer davidii) *will be replaced by shades of yellow, orange and purple in the autumn.*

Acer pseudoplatanus *'Atropurpureum' bears the winged double fruits, called samaras, that are typical of maples.*

underplanting of low herbaceous plants such as daffodils and periwinkle *(Vinca major* or *Vinca minor)* helps provide a cool root run which the maples find beneficial. Make use of the microclimates on your own property.

The trident maple *(A. buergerianum)* is native to China and has long been grown in Japan. The bark flakes in an interesting fashion. Leaves are three-lobed at the apex with three prominent veins running out to the tips of the lobes. This majestic, upright or vase-shaped tree is worthy of consideration.

The Oregon maple *(A. macrophyllum)* is native to Southern California and should be cultivated more widely because it adapts well to summer drought. The leaves, sometimes more than a foot in diameter and deeply dissected, are the largest among maples. The young leaves are often reddish-bronze upon unfurling. At Descanso Gardens it grows near the Japanese Tea House and is underplanted with camellias. Its flowers occur in pendulous racemes of creamy-yellow blossoms which are quite showy in the late winter or early spring.

The Japanese maple *(A. palmatum)* is fairly common in California, especially in Oriental gardens, and is also made into a bonsai. Its leaves are palmately veined and lobed like a fan with from five to nine lobes per leaf. The red flowers are borne in clusters which droop gracefully. In autumn, leaves range from red through orange to yellow. Try purple-leaved cultivars such as 'Atropurpureum' or 'Burgundy Lace' or 'Sango-kaku' with its coral-red winter twigs.

The Norway maple *(A. platanoides)* is a European maple abundant in northern Europe, especially in Finland. Three of the best cultivars with purple-red to black-red leaves are 'Crimson King,' 'Faassen's Black,' and 'Goldsworth Purple.' The spring flowers are an attractive chartreuse.

The sycamore maple *(A. pseudoplatanus)* tolerates salt spray so it is well suited to seashore planting. Cultivars with purple undersides to the leaves are preferable to the species. Look for 'Atropurpureum,' 'Brilliantissimum' and 'Purpureum.'

The red maple *(A. rubrum)* provides much-needed winter interest with its red flowers contrasting against the blue sky on a sunny day in February. The red fruits that follow the flowers extend the color a few more weeks into spring. In autumn the color of its leaves is spectacular here in Southern California. All these attributes as well as its attractive silvery bark make it a fine street tree that should be planted instead of the weak-wooded silver maple *(A. saccharinum).*

The sugar maple *(A. saccharum)* offers two fine subspecies well adapted to Southwestern gardening. Subspecies *floridanum* is native to the South and withstands summer heat well. Undersides of the leaves are glaucous gray-green and often hairy. The base of the blade is usually truncate. Subspecies *grandidentatum* occurs in the Rocky Mountains and in the Grand Canyon. Its leaves are usually green and quite tomentose beneath. Both of these sugar maples are excellent street or lawn specimens because they seldom grow over 20-25 feet tall.

Acer, the genus of the maples, by conservative estimate comprises about 125 species with numerous subspecies, varieties, forms and cultivars. The forms include trees, shrubs and vine-like shrubs that may be either evergreen or deciduous. Most maples are deciduous trees

with the palmate leaf lobes and finger-like veins typified by the Japanese maple *(A. palmatum).*

For the shrub form, visit the San Bernardino Mountains to see *A. glabrum* subspecies *diffusum* which is a distinct geographic subspecies occurring in the arid Great Basin, that intermountain region between the moisture-stopping Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains. A fine shrub for shearing is the hedge maple of Europe *(A. campestre* cv. 'Nanum'). Another shrub is the cultivar 'Durand Dwarf' of the Manchurian species *A. ginnala.*

The vining shrub maples are seen in the vine maple *(A. circinatum)* from the Pacific Northwest and in the Himalayan *A. sikkimense* and *A. sikkimense* subspecies *davidii* which grows at the Arboretum; however, in cultivation it behaves like a tree. One can only speculate about why a shrub or tree becomes a vine in the jungle-like climate in northeastern India.

Distributed throughout the northern hemisphere, maples are also found below the equator as far south as the island of Timor in Indonesia. With such a far-reaching range it follows that maples should vary a great deal, and they do. A few maples are evergreen and can only be grown in subtropical climates such as Southern California. Although most maples are deciduous, the Arboretum has several evergreen types: *A. oblongum, A. orientale* subspecies *syriacum,* and *A. paxii,* respectively from northern India, Syria and southwestern China. *A. laurinum* occurs in Indonesia and the Philippines.

Even the number of leaflets that make up the leaves varies. Certain species such as the beautiful paperbark maple *(A. griseum)* with its glossy mahogany-red bark has leaves made up of three leaflets (trifoliolate leaves). *A. negundo,* on the other hand, has leaves that are either trifoliolate or pinnately compound with from five to seven leaflets along a leafstalk or rachis. Another distinctive maple has leaves that resemble a hornbeam *(Carpinus),* hence the name *(Acer carpinifolium)* which means Carpinus-leaved maple.

Primary indicators that a plant is, in fact, a maple are the leaf arrangement and the fruits. The leaves are opposite in the maples, not alternate as are those of the similar European hornbeam *(Carpinus betulus).* Maple fruits are flattened double samaras like those of the rosewood, but in maples they are paired. Samaras are also found in the ash trees, but the fruits are solitary in the ash.

Flower color is conspicuous in the red maple *(Acer rubrum)* which blooms in the middle of the winter, long before the leaves appear. Each red flower is small, but the myriad give a very good total effect – a sure sign that spring is not too far away. The full moon maple *(A. japonicum)* provides the showiest flowers of the genus with dark burgundy-red sepals and rose-pink petals. Each blossom

As the green bark on these Acer capillipes *twigs matures it will develop the white stripes (detailed in upper photograph) that are typical of the "snakebark" maples.*

is about half an inch in diameter, and there are hundreds per tree. To appreciate its beauty, stand below the small tree on a slope and look up into the blossoms. The bark and twig configurations are also interesting during its brief dormant season.

The colorful glory of the Eastern states can be yours by planting these small trees for the marvelous reds, oranges and golds they bring to California in November and December. Arboretum visitors are encouraged to study the maple collection concentrated in Meadowbrook and the Asiatic Section. The species selected above are all well suited to Southern California and should be more frequently planted for their distinctive bark, colorful flowers and bright autumn foliage.

Dr. Murray, who obtained his PhD at the Pennsylvania State University, is a staff biologist at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum.

A purple-leaved cultivar of the Japanese maple (Acer palmatum *'Atropurpureum'*) *maintains its dramatic color throughout the summer.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH, APRIL, MAY 1985

LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, Arcadia

MARCH 1, 2, 3 — Friday 1 - 4:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Orchid Show
12 Southland Orchid Societies

MARCH 3 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Hummingbird Book Party
Robert and Esther Tyrrell, authors

MARCH 9 — 9 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FAIR

APRIL 6, 7 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Shohin Bonsai Society

APRIL 12, 13, 14 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Cactus and Succulent Show
San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

APRIL 21 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Victorian Herb Fair
Herb Society of America, Southern California unit

APRIL 27, 28 — Saturday 1 - 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
Pacific Rose Society

MAY 5 — 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
BALDWIN BONANZA
California Arboretum Foundation

MAY 19 — 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Epiphyllum Show
Epiphyllum Society

MAY 25, 26, 27 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Santa Anita Bonsai Society
All events sponsored by the California Arboretum Foundation

DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada

MARCH 15, 16, 17 — 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Flower Show
Pasadena Garden Club

MARCH 23, 24 — 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Daffodil Show
Southern California Daffodil Society

MARCH 30 - APRIL 7—9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Spring Garden Show
Descanso Garden Guild

APRIL 20, 21 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
San Fernando Valley Rose Society

MAY 11, 12 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Geranium Show
International Geranium Society

MAY 25 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Antique Dolls and Toys Show
Museum of Childhood

MAY 26 — 2:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Program
All events sponsored by the Descanso Garden Guild

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, Palos Verdes Peninsula

MARCH 3 — 2 p.m.
Azalea Lecture
Eleanor Barker

MARCH 10 — 2 p.m.
Flower Arranging Demonstration
Reiko Kawamura

MARCH 17 — 2 p.m.
Spring Concert
Richard Schwalbe and the Palos Verdes Symphonic Band

MARCH 24 — 2 p.m.
Plant Demonstration
Robert Cornell

APRIL 13, 14 — Sat. noon - 4:30 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Bromeliad Show and Sale
South Bay Bromeliad Associates

MAY 4, 5 — 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Fiesta de Flores

MAY 18, 19 — Saturday 1 - 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Rose Show
South Coast Rose Society
All events sponsored by the So. Coast Botanic Garden Foundation